



State of California  
The Resources Agency  
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**PROJECT TITLE** Fire Investigation Training

**PROJECT LOCATION** San Martin, CA

**COUNTY** Santa Clara

**LEAD AGENCY** California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

**CONTACT** Shana Jones, Division Chief

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**ADDRESS** 15670 Monterey Street, Morgan Hill, CA

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) proposes to use a 10 acre piece of property to assist in annual training of CAL FIRE fire prevention officials in the proper procedures to determine the cause and origin of vegetation fires. The project site is in San Martin, CA between Gilroy and Morgan Hill on the West side of Hwy 101. The 10 acres is immediately adjacent to the San Martin Airport and agricultural lands. The project site is zoned airport industrial which is routinely weeded and used as a helicopter landing site during fire activity in the area. The 10 acres is completely surrounded by a road, however prior to burning, preparation of the area would consist of hand crews construction a 3 foot hand line around the entire burn perimeter to ensure no fire escapes. A CAL FIRE Type 3 fire engine will be present during all burning activities. The topography is flat and vegetated entirely with grasses. The area is free of any threatened or endangered plants or animals. The training would consist of burning small sections of the 10 acres over the course of the one week training. This class is offered annually during the late in May and June as schedules permit. The proposed project is part of an annual training class offered to CAL FIRE personnel and is proposed to occur annually at this location for the next 5 years. All applicable burn permits and notifications will be made prior to the burn week. The Santa Clara Unit Environmental Coordinator will survey the project area every year to confirm the absence of nesting birds or burrowing owls on the site. Additionally, if this training continues at this location beyond the five years as specified, additional CEQA review will be conducted to ensure continued compliance.

### EXEMPTION STATUS

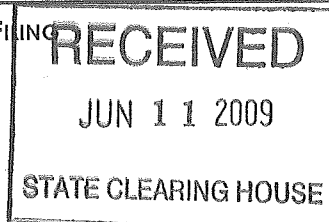
- ☒ **Categorical Exemption** Type/Section: Class 4 §15304
- ☐ **Statutory Exemption (state code section):**
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

### REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

#### Class 4 §15304 Minor Alterations to Land

This project fits within the Class 4 Categorical Exemption described in state law (14 CCR Section 15304) pertaining to minor alterations of land. This project will not have a significant effect on the environment, and is exempt from further environmental analysis under CEQA. Prior to reaching this conclusion, CAL FIRE first conducted a limited environmental impact analysis to confirm that no exemptions exist at the project site which would preclude the use of a Categorical Exemption. The Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Database was consulted during this project preparation and shows no occurrences of Threatened or Endangered Plant species or CNPS 1A or 1B species within the project. Though the CNDDDB did not show any known occurrences of Burrowing Owls in the area a field survey was conducted by CAL FIRE staff. No owls were located on the project site. All applicable burn permits issued from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) will be obtained prior to commencement of burning. Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. CAL FIRE has concluded that no significant environmental impacts would occur. Documentation on the environmental review completed by CAL FIRE is kept on file at CAL FIRE's Santa Clara Unit Headquarters in Morgan Hill, CA.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



William E. Snyder, Deputy Director

Date